

For the Love of Jancy: One-Shots by UntilDawnClimbingClass

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Summary:

Instead of posting a billion one-shots for Jonathan/Nancy, I'll be posting them all here. Please subscribe if you'd like alerts for when I publish a new chapter.

1. Amnesia (RATED G)

Author's Note:

First chapter in Jancy one-shots! Just a quick note that I just can't see myself tagging everything so I'll let everyone know the rating for each chapter and any warnings in case you want to skip or aren't interested.

He hated the smell of coffee. Which is odd, because everyone tells him that he used to like it.

Either way, it's too late. He had already stepped into the coffee shop. The dark, nutty smell was so strong that it could knock his socks off.

His upper lip curled unstoppably. He sat down in a free table and waited.

Ever since he'd gotten in that damn car accident, his life had revolved around waiting. Waiting for his doctor. Waiting in the kitchen, eyes squinted shut, temples throbbing, as if he was about to sneeze. That everlasting feeling of reaching but not grasping—frustration. He would moan: a tiny bubble of a sound.

Oh yes, he had certainly changed since his accident.

He leaned back in his chair. His foot tapped restlessly.

His doctor made him carry around a tape recorder to record his thoughts. During their sessions, they would wind back the tape and listen. He would always be surprised at the things he said—psychotic things. Crazy things.

Together, they would listen to his mumblings ("*My brother's an imposter. This thing has taken my brother and did something with him and now he wants me to stay for dinner and I don't know what to do.*").

His head hurt. The smell of coffee didn't help.

And sometimes, he would forget things. It made everyone angry,

which in turn made him angry, too.

He was jolted out of his thoughts as the chair across from him squeaked. A woman sat down and waved over the waitress. She wore a dark brown scarf that matched her hair.

"Excuse me," he said as politely as he could. "But I'm waiting for someone."

She looked over at him, eyebrows arched. Then, she smiled. "I'll be out of your hair, soon."

"But-"

The waitress arrived, looking very smart and eager in her white shirt and black apron. "What can I get the two of you?"

"One latte with a shot of hazelnut and one hibiscus tea," she ordered crisply, glancing up at the waitress.

He regarded her suspiciously as the waitress hurried off. She was familiar with this place. When she looked at him, he quickly looked down. He wished he brought something to read.

"I ordered for you," the woman said. Her hands were folded neatly on the table.

He looked up and frowned. "You didn't need to."

"Do you like hibiscus tea?" she asked tentatively, looking like she had hoped to please him.

"Better than coffee," he grunted.

She nodded.

"I'll pay," he added.

She smiled. He noticed that she did that a lot. It made her face look nice. "So this is kind of like a date," she commented.

He hadn't offered to pay for hers. It was a misconception that he

didn't bother to correct. It would have been rude to. "I'm waiting for someone," he told her purposefully.

"I'm waiting for someone, too," she nodded understandably.

This surprised him. "Then why are you sitting with me?"

"It's good to have some company while we're both waiting, isn't it?" She unwound the long scarf from her neck. She smiled at him again. "You looked like you really weren't enjoying yourself."

Their orders came on a round, black platter. The hibiscus smelled sweet and familiar, like a perfume he had once loved on someone. He paused, eyes squinted as if about to sneeze. His lips thinned in concentration. A small moan, but no release.

"Is something wrong?" Her eyes looked especially wide over the rim of her latte.

"I'm trying to remember something," he told her truthfully. Her words had broken his concentration. He shrugged and sipped the tea.

For a few moments, neither of them spoke.

"It's a beautiful day outside," she sighed. Her face was reflected in the glass window of the shop.

"It is kind of nice," he nodded, looking outside, too. "If you're into that gray, misty weather type of thing."

"This kind of weather is a little depressing, but has its charms," she grinned, looking at him.

"It's a bad day for driving. All types of accidents happen in this weather." He took another sip of tea. It made him feel better and forget that the person he was waiting for was very late.

"Spoken from experience?" she asked conversationally.

He nodded. "I was in a car accident last year. It was pretty bad."

"I was in a car accident, too, last year. A big one. My fiancé almost

died in it."

He raised his eyebrows. He felt oddly sulky at the mention of a fiancé. He wondered if they were still together. She was rather pretty. "How is he now?"

She shrugged, taking a gulp of her latte. She breathed in deeply the scent of it. He wondered how she could do that without throwing up. "He's neither here nor there."

"I know how that feels."

She smiled. "I don't know how you can stand it. Sometimes, I feel like I can't even stand him when he feels like that."

"It's nothing we can help," he said, slightly defensive.

"Oh, I know that." She set down her mostly empty cup. Absently, she ran her finger along the rim. "You know, we were supposed to get married this past summer."

"Winter weddings aren't bad, either," he said.

She looked up at him. "You really think so? Don't you think the winter weather's a bit...gray?"

"You said yourself this kind of weather has its charms."

"But what do you think?" she pressed.

"I think the weather doesn't have anything to do with the wedding, frankly. A wedding is about love, right?"

She smiled, though she looked a bit sad. "Well, I think I'll wait until next summer anyways. He'll be better by then. I want the wedding to go smoothly. Wedding day only comes around once."

"Unless you get married a second time," he pointed out.

She finished her latte. "I don't think so. I really love this guy so I think I'll stick around."

"He's lucky to have you," he told her sincerely. "Is he the one you're waiting for here?"

"Yeah," she nodded, then sighed softly. "But I don't think he's going to show up today." She pushed back her chair and stood, wrapping her scarf around her neck. She moved her hair out from under the scarf as she said, "You promised to pay, right?"

He hesitated, but nodded in the end. "Yeah, sure."

"Thanks." Smiling, she turned and walked out of the coffee shop. He watched her long hair move as she did. The bells on the door jingled.

There was a faint scent of hibiscus flowers. He finished his tea. After waiting five more minutes, he called for the check.

As he flipped open his wallet, he noticed a picture inside of a pretty dark haired woman.

He squinted. Moan and release. Quickly, he put some money on the table and ran out to the street. There were some busy Christmas shoppers, but no sign of her.

Finally, far down the street, he saw an incarnadine dot.

"Nancy!" he called, chasing after her. He used his elbows mercilessly to get through.

The woman turned around.

He paused to catch his breath, then leaned forward and kissed her. "Sorry I'm late."

2. Valentine

Summary for the Chapter:

Rated G

Notes for the Chapter:

This wasn't actually written by me, but by a friend of mine who can't create her own account right now to post any of her own stories and has asked me to post this for her. Hope you all enjoy!

Nancy was restocking the Valentine's day aisle when he came around the corner and just stood there, not saying anything, with his hands in the pockets of his jacket. She almost dropped the teddy bear in her hands that was holding a heart.

"Uh, hi," he said awkwardly, barely able to look her in the eye.

"Hi. Um, it's Jonathan, right? Will's older brother." As if she didn't already know.

"Yeah," Jonathan said. "I... didn't know you worked here."

He didn't smile. He never does, unless he's really, truly happy or amused. It's one of the reasons he's never invited to parties. Aside from the fact that everyone thinks he's just some weird loner, that is.

"So...what are you looking for?" She asked, going into salesgirl mode and feeling almost stupid. "A card, or a present...anything I can help you with?"

All the pink and red in the store suddenly made her stomach jump. It was February tenth. If he wanted that kind of card and/or present...for another girl...how was she supposed to sell it to him?

She hoped she wasn't looking too upset, and just in case, she put the teddy bear on the top shelf so she wouldn't have to look Jonathan in the eye.

"I'm looking for a Valentine's Day card," he said. "For... a girl I know."

Okay. Pull yourself together. You knew that was coming anyway. You don't know him...you don't even talk to him...he's just another customer.

She tried to look completely unconcerned, but from the way his eyes flickered over her face, she's not sure how well it worked.

"The card section's over there," she said, but he'd already spotted it before she said a word. "I'll just...be over here if you need help finding one or something."

She gave one last adjusting touch to a beanbag Cupid's underpants and began to fold up the now empty carton for recycling.

"Um, Nancy."

She spun around. "Yeah?"

"Could you actually...I'm not sure which one to choose."

Nancy smoothed her blue nylon salesgirl vest and strolled on over in her best 'everything's cool' style. "Well, it depends on who the card's for. Girlfriend cards are over – "

"She's not my girlfriend," he blurted out, looking more embarrassed – and frankly, more human – than she'd ever seen him.

A tight knot began to form in the pit of her stomach. This had to be one of the most important sales she's ever made...Jonathan's happiness depended on it. If the girl didn't like the card she chose, would he blame her?

"How about a funny one then?" She suggested. "They're cute."

Jonathan turned to her with one arched eyebrow.

"Would you like it if a boy gave you this?" He asked, holding up an example.

It was the one with the squirrel. A fat, crazy-eyed cartoon squirrel fondling an acorn and saying in squiggly red letters: **I've gone nuts...**

She didn't need to open it to know that inside it read: **No, not that kind. I'm nutty over you!**

"Ugh, no!" She said, nose wrinkling.

"No?" Jonathan looked genuinely curious.

"Well, your – uh, the person who's receiving the card might," she backtracked. "I don't know what she's like. You see, these cards – " She waved her hand around, indicating the shelves. "They're as different as the people who buy them. You gotta think about her personality, her tastes – what she wears, how she acts, things like that. Does she laugh and talk a lot? Is she emotional or more of a quiet type? Does she have a problem with fluffy animals or roses? Because if she does, you might wanna try a different store."

Jonathan smiled. It was a small smile, just a little quirk at the corners of his mouth and eyes, but his entire face was transformed.

"She does laugh and talk a lot," he said. "But when she thinks no one's watching, she can look very serious, very thoughtful...It makes me wonder what she thinks about. I find her...I don't know. Fascinating, I guess."

His eyes, which had been looking over her shoulder at the mysterious girl in his thoughts, suddenly focused on her again.

"You seem to have put a lot of thought into the greeting card business," he said. "Why is it you work here, anyway? What do you enjoy the most?"

"Well, uh..."

It was a conversation. A real conversation. The most she'd ever heard him say before today was during project presentations in class. Now here he was, asking her for her personal opinion – and it took an embarrassingly long time before she recovered from her surprise enough to actually voice it.

"I like cute things, I guess," she said, with a shrug. "Even when they're a bit too cliché or different. And I like looking at the people who buy them and imagining what'll happen...like, I see a middle-aged lady

buying one of those ballerina music boxes, and I'm thinking, maybe that's for her daughter. And I picture the little girl unwrapping the package, you know, and then squeaking out loud because that's exactly what she wanted. Or I see all these people buying Valentine's right now, and I can imagine what kind of a love story is behind each one...I know it's silly and naïve and everything, but I like to imagine that the stuff in this store isn't just a cash grab...that it's actually there to make people happy."

A wrinkle of concentration formed between Jonathan's eyebrows as he listened.

"I've never thought of these places like that before," he said. "You have a point. Listen, um, Nancy....can I ask you a personal question?"

He took a small step closer. He's not exactly tall, but with him so close, she suddenly realized that they wouldn't have to bend to kiss one another. Not like when she dated Steve Harrington.

Not that she was thinking about kissing, of course.

"Uh, sure."

"Do you have any favorites out of all these...cute things? Anything you'd like to buy for yourself? I could use the suggestion for...her."

The floor seemed to drop under her like an elevator plummeting downwards. For *her* – of course. She was starting to really dislike this girl, whoever she was, and she was half tempted to sell Jonathan the nutty squirrel card after all.

"Well, to be honest," she said, with a laugh that came out more like a squeak, "I already own most of the stuff I like. Employee discount, you know. There's only one thing I..."

She stopped, glancing over at the card shelf they were still standing next to.

"Yeah?"

She caved in and handed him the card, along with its scarlet envelope. It was the last copy left and she really hoped her hand

wasn't shaking. Jonathan took it in both hands and opened it solemnly, like a book.

It showed a black and white photograph of the Eiffel Tower above an avenue of winter-bare, snow-covered trees. The picture was printed with silver snowflakes that shimmered when you moved the card and red cursive letters in the same material, reading: ***The most romantic place in the world...*** The inside, which Jonathan was studying intently, completed the sentence: ***...is anywhere you are.***

Nancy couldn't explain it, but to her that card meant something – more than any she'd ever sold. It touched exactly the right note: elegant without being stiff, romantic without being mushy. She'd considered buying this last copy for herself; only the sheer pitifulness of buying her own Valentine card had stopped her so far. As for Jonathan, she'd never had the guts to give it to him.

But now she was giving it to him...only not in the way she'd dreamed.

"You think she'll like it?" She managed to say.

Jonathan's eyes shone like the snowflakes on the card. "I know she will," he said softly, closing the card for another look at the photograph. "It's perfect."

So he'd noticed too.

Feeling like she was moving through fog, she got behind the cash counter, checked the price and chirped, "Four sixty-five please. Would you like a bag?" in the 'friendly' tone her boss had told her always to use. She'd never heard her own voice sounding so fake before.

He fished a crumpled five out of his pocket and shook his head to show he didn't want a bag; She counted out the change, thanking her stars for the calculator because at this point, she could barely add one plus one. Her hands were cold and sticky with sweat; she had to open a new roll of nickels and it felt like ages until she could rip the paper apart. Once she had the thirty-five cents together somehow, she dropped them on the counter to avoid touching his hand and the rattling noise they made was so loud, even the hairdressers next door

might have noticed.

Jonathan slipped the card into the inside pocket. He made a sudden move with his right hand, as if he wanted to – what? Shake hands? High-five her? – and drew it away again.

"Thank you, Nancy," he said, with his most beautiful smile yet. "I'll see you at school."

It was as if his face were a stained-glass window with the sun behind it; it made her dizzy just to look at him.

"You're welcome," said that phony chirpy voice.

He walked away with his head held high. At the front, he turned back once and gave her a small wave. By the time she remembered her manners and waved back, he was already gone.

When Valentine's Day arrived, she got two cards. One was from Barb, who'd bought it at another store as usual, to surprise her. They were the roses-and-teddy-bears kind, nothing special; it was the second card that made her flip.

It had been slotted through the side of her locker door, meaning whoever-it-was knew which locker was hers. That bright red envelope meant business; there were no names on it, sending her mind into a crazy spiral of conjectures about who the giver could possibly be. Her lab partner in chemistry, with the polo shirts and sunglasses? That senior boy who won a prize for his depressing love poem? The girls, playing a joke on her? Steve Harrington? Or could it be...?

She knew that shade of red.

She could hear the blood pounding in her ears like the bass in a song as her heart pounded. People were rushing past behind her, talking loudly, but she paid them no attention. Some girl bumped her and she hardly noticed. That card felt like the center of the universe.

She opened the envelope right there.

It was *her* card.

Inside, in a small, precise hand slanted to the right, new words had been added.

To Nancy, the girl I find fascinating.

Meet me in the dark room after school? If you want to, that is. You may just rip this up and never speak to me again.

Jonathan

Nancy smiled softly and closed the card before putting it in her bag and opening her locker. Once she had everything she needed, she headed to the only place she needed—and wanted—to be right now.